

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

FINAL REPORT OF THE GRADUATION WORK

**KEY INFLUENCES ON STUDENT SUCCESS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	CONTENT	PAGES
I.	General Introduction	i – ii
II.	Objectives	iii
III.	Justification	iv
IV.	Essay on How to Become a Successful Student at the University of El Salvador.	1
IV.	Students' Success Can Be Achieved at the University of El Salvador with the Following Factors:	
	1. Family Involvement	2
	2. Expectations	4
	3. College Involvement	5
	4. Economic Aid and Tuition Waivers	6
	5. Time Management	8
	6. Responsibility vs. Control	9
	7. Balance your life (Wellness)	13
	8. Task Precision	14
V.	Conclusions	18
VI.	Recommendations	20
VII.	Methodology	22
VIII.	Bibliography	23
IX.	Annexes	25

## INTRODUCTION

The present graduation work is an argumentative essay and its topic is “Key Influences on Student Success at the University of El Salvador” which shows how the students who attend the University of El Salvador can get better opportunities to finish their majors successfully. High school graduates in the country start facing difficulties just to be accepted at the only state-funded university. They do not receive the correct counseling from their high schools or family and friends, and they find it almost impossible to enter the university. This essay is intended to explain the major factors that help students to be successful at this higher level of studies. These keys are: Family Involvement, Expectations, College Involvement, Economic Aid and Tuition Waivers, Time Management, Responsibility vs. Control, Wellness, and Task Precision.

Family Involvement, refers to the importance that family plays in the completion of a student's major. This starts from the moment the high school graduate applies to enter to the university and it continues until the girl or boy completes his school plan. Expectations are also a key where students are able to think of what to expect for themselves in the future, in terms of having a successful career; but while they are studying they can also have expectations during the period of time in which they finish their major such as finishing on due time, doing the best performance, and getting any kind of recognition when graduating. College involvement is related to the role the university plays in terms of helping the students to succeed. The school must have all the necessary physical implements;

also its faculty must be strong enough to fulfill the major's needs. The Economic Aid and Tuition Waivers keys deal with the importance of having enough economic support to attend school. Scholarships are also mentioned in this work since they are very important because many students are able to finish their major and to do a better performance in class. These students have the obligation of getting good grades to keep their academic status. Time Management tells us how students learn to manage their time at school and home. They learn to plan ahead and to determine time constraints to complete assignments successfully. Responsibility vs. Control is a key that tells students to be responsible with all the activities inside the university and to have control over them for not failing any subject. Wellness advises students to keep, in general, good health and to take into consideration behavioral symptoms such as constant stress, sleeplessness, poor nutrition, or depression since they affect the quality of life. Task Precision refers to how to complete every task in class or homework in an effective way since by doing an excellent research, achieving all the information for the homework, or being very persuasive at any oral presentation, the student will get a better grade from the teacher and will not fail any course.

## **GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

To present key influences that help students to achieve academic success at higher education institutions.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- To analyze the most important keys that allows students to achieve academic success at the University of El Salvador in the Foreign Language Department.
- To provide some ideas on how to achieve success at the higher education level.

## JUSTIFICATION

This project is intended to make members of the university community to realize about the importance of being academically successful at the college level since there is very little research or none that has been carried out about the topic in the country. As a group, we think that it is important that the academic community know what influences have direct impact on students' academic achievement, so college students become successful at the end of their major. Key influences that affect student's success, also called factors by other authors, are mentioned along the essay. These are considered good guidelines for the students' success, if some or most of these are present, students will have better performance and will improve their learning and grades throughout their major. Also these influences will help students to be successful not only at the university, but also in their whole life because these are guidelines that can be adapted to the role that anyone plays and help to have a very organized and meaningful way of living (Mary O'Malley, Ruth Stanton, Marc Legar, 1998). University students get in academic troubles when they are affected by external factors such as working and studying at the same time, living far from the university makes students to rent a house or an apartment in order to stay near the university campus, lacking familiar support to continue studying, having a low socio-economic level, and having low self esteem, among others. These are enough reasons to give some strategies, ideas or techniques to help them to be a successful student at the higher level. This will permit them to interact actively in their school environment with enough proficiency and good performance every time they get evaluated or tested.

## **KEY INFLUENCES ON STUDENT SUCCESS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**

To succeed in college there are a number of key influences which the student has to take into account in order to finish the major and graduate successfully. At high performing colleges and universities, a variety of groups are all pushing and pulling in the same direction to challenge and support students to perform at high levels (*O'Malley, Stanton, and Legar, 1998*). This effort requires leadership and coordination from main authorities: rector, deans, vice deans, professors, teacher assistants, information technology specialists, librarians, and others. Students seem to thrive when an institution enacts a holistic philosophy of talent development and provides support from multiple sources. In addition, improvement efforts have a much better chance of succeeding, when they spring from strategic visioning exercises and enjoy the support of the public authorities at the Educational community: main authorities, faculty members, and student leaders (D. Kuh 2005).

UES and FLD face major challenges. Getting the necessary budget for the university is not easy. So it is maintaining poor students with economic aid: scholarships (397) in the School of Arts and Sciences. Students give some support to poor students, but the support it is not enough because there are a lot of students that need this kind of help according with their necessities in their social environment. Some of these students have troubles with their families, economic, etc.



The purpose of this paper is to present ideas of experiences in other countries, particularly those of developed countries that can help to develop the success of the students at the university.

## **Students Can Achieve Academic Success at the University of El Salvador with the Following Key Influences:**

### **Family Involvement**

Serves to promote and support the social, emotional, physical, academic, and occupational growth of youth. Successful family involvement relies on meaningful collaboration among youth, families, schools, employers, and agencies.

One of the basic and no less important aspects in academic success for college students is the influence that the family in a first year college student may play. The encouragement of the college freshman and/or participation of one's family in college appear to be an important key in the student's success in college. Family expectations of success may be as important as student's own expectations (Hackman & Dysinger, 1970). College persisters are more likely to come from families whose parents are more educated. Students get more parental advice, praise and expressed interest (Tellez y Waxman 2006).

Parental feelings that "getting an education is important," being proud when showing one's report card to parents," and "discussing future careers with one's family" are important factors in the equation of college success and persistence (Lunneborg & Lunneborg, 1976). The numbers of books in the home, sibling educational attainment, as well as parental expectations have shown to add to college success (Metsker & Trent, Scope Study, 1968).

Most Salvadoran families belong to the working class and they can only afford to send their children to the University of El Salvador; this university has a long tradition of academic excellence and parents think their children are going to have the best education they can receive at this institution. Due to the worldwide economic crisis and the dollarized economy of the country, a student's family becomes the basic support for the new college student because they advise them to do the best effort since the very beginning of the first year for the child do not fail. So the economic support is important for the student to attend classes daily for all the subjects, and be able to afford all the material required by the teachers to complete the teaching-learning process.

In addition, it is safe to assume that students get enrolled with the intent of being academically successful at the university. However, for some students, they find that they are unable to maintain academic good standing for a variety of reasons – both academic and personal.

## Expectations

Expectations can be defined as a set of goals to achieve during the period to complete the major that begins by the first semester and ending on the day when the biggest goal is achieved that is the graduation day. Successful students have their own goals and expectations related to assignments, areas of study and future careers (Lunneborg & Lunnegorg, 1976). Success in school is also generated by one's own demand to seek and discover new and challenging experiences. This seeking is combined with setting one's own discovery course, instead of merely "taking in" what is offered by instructors. Lack of flexibility was found to be characteristic of drop-outs (Jones, 1955; Lavin, 1965). Setting career goals for university students is a crucial step towards success. Career goals are the focus and the reasons behind all the hard work they are doing now. When they don't have a sense of what they're moving towards, things can seem pretty pointless. Knowing how a particular assignment relates in the long run to their future career can be the motivation they need to actually do it.

- The students must ask themselves these questions to help them set their career goals: where do I want to be in 5-10 years time? What do I see myself doing (studying, working)?; how will my present studies take me there?; what else do I need to be doing now to get there (volunteer/part-time work)?; what obstacles might prevent me from achieving this goal?; what can I be doing to overcome these obstacles?

## **College Involvement**

College involvement can be characterized in several ways, such as living on campus, part-time campus jobs (Astin, 1984), through friendship support (Bern et al, 1966; Scott, 1971), from extra-curricular activities (Wolford, 1964; Bernis, 1967; Spady, 1971), and from college faculty interaction (Rock, 1971; Spady, 1970). Campus involvement on the part of the student not only relates to academic success, but also to identity achievement (Weston & Stein) and general satisfaction with the academic experience (Witt & Handal, 1984). Lack of involvement seems to be a negative influence. Students who lacked involvement appeared powerless and used by others for purposes other than their own (Seaman, 1959).

The importance of involvement within the campus to success is best summed up by Vincent Tinto (1975):

Instance of social integration occurs primarily through informal peer group associations, semi-formal extra-curricular activities and interaction with faculty and administrative personnel within the college. Successful encounters in these areas result in various degrees of social communication, friendship support, faculty support, and college affiliation. Each of which can be viewed as important social rewards that become part of a person's generalized evaluation of the costs and benefits of college attendance.

Success at university is more than just doing well in classes; it is to know how to work with the system. The Foreign Language Department at UES has an special area that was created to help students to interact with the community and the students themselves, this is “Departamento de Proyección Social” that is in charge of helping students to obtain a place where they can perform their social service by giving them different options to do it.

Students can do their social service as: teacher assistant, teacher at CENIUES, as a librarian of the Foreign Language Department Library among others.

## **Economic Aid and Tuition Waivers**

An economic aid is to have enough money to support a person or a cause and a tuition waiver is a form of financial aid offered by many educational institutions to selected students in need. The waiver of tuition always reduces or eliminates the need for tuition reimbursement because the school is covering the cost of the course or partially covering the cost of the course.

A remarkable aspect to become successful in higher education is the economic situation of some students in the University of El Salvador. Some of them have to get a job in order to continue studying; and this situation does not permit these students to finish their major in the time that is required by the curriculum or maybe they do not finish the major because the job that they have does not permit them to continue studying anymore.

But, in some circumstances some students receive sponsorship from a relative that helps them to continue studying without getting a job. This is a very important support for the students who want to study and do not have the possibility to do it.

Another important support to mention is that low-economic level students have the opportunity to obtain a scholarship at the School of Arts and Sciences of the University of El Salvador. Scholarships or tuition waivers help students to finish their majors, but these students must take into account that they have to keep a GPA of (8.0 or higher), since these plans have very strict rules; in other words, students need to be good, academically speaking. Currently, the University of El Salvador gives 170 scholarships to the students of the School of Arts and Sciences and these students receive a certain amount of money that helps them to keep studying and finishing their majors. Also, there are 10 students who have tuition waivers because they have a very low socioeconomic level as well as 20 other students whose tuition is waived because they got the highest scores in their high schools, and there are 197 students who have tuition waivers because they are employees or employee's children at the University. So the above information makes a total of 397 scholarships in the School of Arts and Sciences. It is important to mention that there were 26 students in the Foreign Language Department with a scholarship during the second semester of 2009, these are distributed among the three majors that the department has which are: Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles Opcion Enseñanza, Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con especialidad en Frances e Ingles, and Profesorado en Idioma Ingles para Tercer

Ciclo de Educacion Basica y Media (Lic. Yesenia Beatriz Martinez de Guzman, 2010, the Socioeconomic Coordinator of the University of El Salvador).

## **Time Management**

Time management is the art of arranging, organizing, scheduling, and budgeting one's time for the purpose of generating more effective work and productivity. There is an abundance of books, classes, workshops, day-planners, and seminars on time management, which teach individuals and corporations how to be more organized and more productive. Time management has become crucial in recent years thanks to the 24/7, busy world in which we live.

Time management is important for everyone. While time management books and seminars often place their focus on business leaders and corporations, time management is also crucial for students, teachers, factory workers, professionals, and home makers. Time management is perhaps most essential for the person who owns his or her own business or who runs a business out of the home. Managing work and home responsibilities under the same roof takes a special type of time management.

Time has become a measuring stick of our worth or an end in itself. Efficiency in our culture is inseparable from time. Planning ahead and determining time constraints in completing assignments successfully is important in a highly technical culture. "Getting my work in on time" has a direct bearing on grades and

graduation. Lewin (1976) found time and success were complimentary qualities between person and environment.

It is important for students to manage the time efficiently. College students attend classes, do homework, study for tests and exams, and some of them may hold part-time jobs, or may participate on a team sport. University students must remember: plan ahead, include extra time for major projects, and break major tasks down into smaller ones, and alternate between a difficult task and an easy one.

Students must plan ahead for the different activities that will take place during the semester so they will be able to assign the right time to every activity such as: attending classes, doing homework for every subject, studying for exams, doing extracurricular activities, having team meeting with classmates. This could be done by setting up a calendar for the entire semester and pointing out every due date for each activity. Activities must be prioritized in order of importance so an estimated time can be assigned to each one.

## **Responsibility Vs Control**

Responsibility is the social force that binds you to the courses of action demanded by that force; "we must instill a sense of duty in our children"; "every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty"- John D. Rockefeller Jr. Control is intended to cover various formal and informal arrangements, including trusts, agreements, understandings and practices under



which a person comes to be in a position to exercise control over a broadcasting service license, a newspaper or a company.

College success is often measured by a process requiring a gradual increase in responsibility year by year and an acceptance by the student that he has increasing control over his academic success. School assignments are first required by the teacher to train the student to take responsibility. Gaining responsibility during their freshman year accounted for over 33% of the critical events by college students, and "being on my own" appears the most critical (Straub, 1987). The ultimate goal of this process is for the student to assume responsibility intrinsically. For example, when a student says, "I should have known that," or "It's my job to get my homework in on time," he is identifying responsibility and his need to be in control. Unlike upper classmen, first year students believe that their instructors have more of an influence over their performance than is warranted (Schmelzer & Schmelzer, 1987).

Taking responsibility for one's success must be coupled with taking control. Knowing expectations and taking the necessary control to get them accomplished may be two different things. Those in control of events often find the event to motivate them to try harder or to put it another way, involved students like to be in control (Madden, et al, 1987). Involvement and control seem to go hand in hand. For example, Astin states, "It seems clear that the effectiveness of any attempt to increase student involvement is highly contingent on the student's perceived locus of control" (Astin, 1984).

Furthermore, people who control outcomes have a greater satisfaction with the circumstances of their environment (Langer, 1983). While freshmen believe their instructors had more control over their performance, upper classmen learned to rely more on themselves and their peers for success (Schmelzer, et al, 1987).

Life has a way of handing us ups and downs when we least expect them. This means that sometimes the student's life is going to get in the way of their studies. It's important to realize and accept that there will be times when they are just not able to work or study because life issues are demanding more attention. If this happens in order to be ready they must seek out resources to help themselves to deal with the situation.

The first thing, is the effective and responsible individual work that the student assumes (but not in all cases) for example the student must: know the specific deadlines, extraordinary deadlines, policies, procedures to change of career beside other procedures relating to their academic status, course withdrawal, course repeats, course registration, and major program application and admission.

Students should keep track of all grades in each course. At any point and time in the semester they should know exactly what grade they have in each course. To do this, they must understand how the professor calculates their course grade as described in the course syllabus. Also, they will need to log each test score, paper grade, quiz score, etc. Also, it is impossible to replace the learning that occurs by attending and participating in class. "Getting the notes" is not the same as attending class. Prioritizing and organizing their study and personal time into daily

and weekly patterns of effectiveness is pivotal. Maintaining regular study hours and establishing study environments in order to be productive throughout the entire semester is also a key.

Develop timelines and keep semester, monthly, and weekly calendars for dates when course assignments are due. Plan and prepare for exams and papers in advance.

- Go to office hours in order to get assessment, ask questions, and talk with instructors.
- Review continuously in their courses.
- Develop a network of resources. Make a list of phone numbers and email addresses of your faculty student from each class.
- Communicate and collaborate with activities in the campus in order to support their knowledge and network.
- Utilize the appropriate campus services starting at the beginning of the semester.

The second thing is the change of environment (psychological and physical) that begins as a pressure in the new academic life of these students. In this section we will separate the students who live in town and the students who live in the country side and they must travel to study.

The first part of these students will be able to adapt themselves to this “academic challenge” faster than the ones who have to live the immigration to downtown because this is a hard process in the life of every human being, but for “university

beginners” is the hardest process in their life because there is an unscrambled situation between the innate capacity of learning and their academic evaluation system; among lower psycho emotional competences, minimum or useless academic support inside the Campus and finally, the limited familiar assistance that can take them to failure. Those students generally have low self esteem, minimum numbers of friends, limited numbers of individual participation in class, minimum or null participation in class/campus activities and unfortunately this caused: partial cognitive development. These situations affect enormously the dialogue, meetings and interaction between students course which unique objective is avoid antisocial attitudes, intolerant conducts and discrimination.

### **Balance Your Life (Wellness)**

Wellness is first and foremost a choice to assume responsibility for the quality of your life. It begins with a conscious decision to shape a healthy lifestyle. Wellness is a mindset, a predisposition to adopt a series of key principles in varied life areas that lead to high levels of well-being and life satisfaction.

Behavioral symptoms such as constant stress, sleeplessness, poor nutrition, or depression are often a deterrent to college success. While these symptoms are characteristics of many psychological states, as well as diseases, detrimental symptomatology may also become relational avoidance (Rich & Slovel, 1978). Depression, anxiety, and stress have been known to impede school and college success. Burnout appears important as a factor in student attrition (Pantages & Creedon, 1974). Devoting all of the time to school work may sound like a sure fire

way to succeed in the courses, but living only for school can actually lead to burn-out. Conversely, spending too much time on leisure or other activities can lead to major stress (or even failure) when exam time comes. Finding the proper balance between time for school and time for everything else is a crucial step in achieving success.

1. Make a list of all of their roles in life (student, friend, parent, worker, volunteer, athlete, etc.). Some roles will obviously demand more time than others so, determine time to each role.
2. Strike a healthy balance allowing time for study, rest and play.
3. Schedule time to do enjoyable things.
4. Plan for exams and assignments well ahead of time so the balance won't be disrupted.
5. Students must use time management strategies to organize time.

## **Task Precision**

College success is partially defined by producing a series of class projects or tasks. Expecting to do well at a task in the academic environment is directly related to persistence within the institution (Bucklin & Bucklin, 1970, Coker, 1968, Medsker & Trent, 1968). These tasks are by their action of "doing" (Astin, 1981). A good student might be able to say, "My term paper assignment requires me to put out a

lot of effort and yet show an interest in the topic. I have to do the project in a careful manner, making sure I follow the teacher's evaluation criteria."

A good set of notes can serve them well. Their notes help to remember which concepts the professor stressed and, give an idea as to what will be covered in the exam. Note taking also helps to concentrate them on the lecture.

Before class they should: Preview the pertinent chapter in the textbook, review notes from last class, formulate questions to ask in class, make sure they have paper and pen to write down.

During class they should: listen for and write down main ideas rather than try to record everything, watch for cues from the teacher to select and to organize main ideas, use abbreviations wherever possible, and leave space to add missing ideas.

After class they should: read their notes over and fill in missing details as soon as possible, check a classmate's notes to see if they missed significant details, relate their class notes to notes from the text to get the complete picture, review the notes regularly and test them to see how much they can recall.

Most of the material the students have to learn at university is presented in written form. That's why it's so important to know an active reading technique that will enable them to learn and remember what they read.

- Survey: Before start to read, the students should take few minutes to skim over the main features of the text: title, headings, introduction, summary,

pictures/graphs, margin notes, etc. This will give them an idea of what the chapter or journal article is about and what the big, important ideas are.

- Question: Turn the heading of the section into a question such as "What is .....?" A question helps read faster and remember better.
- Read: Read the section selectively to answer clearly the question.

Commitment to task seems to be quite important. For example, lower achievers lack persistence and conscientiousness in study skills (Mitchell & Piatrowska, 1980). Some researchers feel the learning environment must receive sufficient student effort and investment of energy to bring about the desired learning and development (Astin, 1974).

"The closer I follow the assignment with accuracy, the higher the grade I'll earn" is an example of an often-repeated belief of university students. Reflecting a strong project/goal orientation and a need to complete the task in a near perfect manner are the most important success characteristics of this criterion. Tinto has said, "Other things being equal, one would anticipate goal commitment to be directly related to persistence in college" (Tinto, 1975). Task and goal orientation in relationship to "high certainty of selection of a major" appeared as a factor of persistence three times higher than in "low certainty major selection" (Tittle & Tittle, 1980). But attainment of goals is not only related to academic expectations, it is highly related to future occupational goals (Spaeth, 1970).

If one of the purposes of higher education is to socialize the student into a highly technical culture, then precision is a value of college success. For example, lower

division grade success requires equally important perfection in spelling and grammar content master (Hallberg, 1988). Few would argue that being correct in freshman mathematics or English courses has a high correlation with grade performance. Math grades are earned by "number correct" and in English essays, two grades are given - one is for content and style while the second grade is given for perfection in language usage.

Moreover, grade success is often assessed on the basis of following directions well and the elimination of errors. In one study of freshman students' persistence and active study, reported goal setting and time management related closely to success (Schmelzer, et al 1987).

Along the years the need of finishing a major for any college student has become a must since the market of employments is very demanding and it has risen up the requirements for its applicants. So, as a conclusion it can be said that college students nowadays need to know all the necessary tools to be successful on any major they decide to study and not only approving any subject but also achieving good grades and the best information to have a good performance in their future career. By these, college students should make a personal assessment to see whether or not they are able to follow the process described on this essay to become successful; but if their own answer is no they have to look for better ways to get along with these factors.



## CONCLUSIONS

We conclude that college students who want to finish their major must plan ahead their needs, their future goals, check on their abilities, and their economic situation so they may study what is best for them, and by doing this they can rest assure that success will be achieved very easily.

- Students also have to take into consideration the personal-related key influences like the economic factor and this is very important because if they do not have the enough money to attend school any kind of sponsorship should be looked for within their family or any other institution; scholarships inside the university are good means to supply the student's economical necessities, and if students have set their goals for their future it will be easy to keep a scholarship with high grades and an outstanding performance.
- The Family Involvement aspect is also very important because it helps students a lot to achieve their goals because the most emotional support from every member of the family a student can have the better and easy will be to feel confident and successful to complete the major and eventually get graduated.
- Within the specific major they should plan other aspects like the number of subjects they will take every semester, what the requirements are for every subject, and the time that is going to be spent for every subject as well as the time they will take to complete tasks, homework, and to study for any exam; for this it is very important to follow what has been described in the

school-related key influences which are: College Involvement, Time Management, Responsibility vs. Control, and task precision.

- Another key that goes with every student along their whole life is Wellness. Students must consider that good health is very important in every day life; eating healthy food, taking vitamins, etc. will keep them away from illnesses so they will not have to miss important event at the university because they are sick. Besides, they must keep away from stressful situations, to have enough piece of mind for being able to get focused on their duties at school. Mental and body health are basic but important features on a student's life, and having a good balance between them will help the student to always be prepared to perform with excellence and to be successful not only in the university but also in the entire career and life.
- First of all students must take into consideration the Annual Academic Calendar of Activities that the UES gives to the students at the beginning of the first semester every year to have an overview of the major activities in terms of general procedures to follow during the semester in every School of the University.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of the recommendations, we can say the following:

- The university should be updated with the needs of the market outside for the future professionals fit into any company since they will have acquired the right knowledge to apply it on any job.
- It is also important that the faculty be updated every time with the advances in science, technology, socio-cultural patterns, languages, etc. in order to make students be aware of the changes in the world. If teachers give to students the same information they taught fifteen years ago students will probably fail in the future because they never received the updated information about the topics they were taught.
- Nowadays, the population is growing faster than twenty years ago, so we can say that infrastructure of the university is getting smaller so this means that more buildings and rooms are needed for all schools inside the university.
- Also there should be an update on technological tools that every school uses to teach students according to the most updated requirements of the market; for example, The Foreign Language Department needs to have the best equipment, as in the case of computer and audiovisual equipment, for the students can have the best environment to achieve the knowledge of any language so they will perform better in the future if the place where they learned provided the best experience to learn a language.

- Furthermore, we recommend that the university should implement workshops, at the beginning of every year, in which beginner students are taught about the different key influences that will affect their student life like Time Management, Task Precision, Wellness, and Responsibility vs. Control so they can have an idea of what to do during the whole major.
- Finally, we would like to recommend that the University should open an office in charge of helping the students on their own development. This office should create tutoring offices on every school of the university to help students to do better on their subjects; also, there should be activities for the student that helps them to learn to interact with students from their own school and from other schools as well among other activities that help them to succeed satisfactorily.

As a group we hope that these factors and recommendations about the needs that students have for being successful will be taken into account in the future by those who feel that success is important in life because it helps students' performance and gives them the chance to get involved in the activities that the University has so the students will finish their major successfully; also by being successful in college, better chances of being successful in their future's career will come. A little more elaboration would not hurt.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research topic was selected among the different topics suggested by the coordinators of the graduation seminar; we analyzed all of them and narrowed down the options with the ones that were of most interest for the group, finally we came into the agreement that the topic that needs special attention, which is going to be developed in this essay, is Key Influences on Student Success at the University of El Salvador affecting the academic success in college students because the group needs to emphasize the importance of being a good student to have a great success in the future and becoming an excellent professional.

The literature search started right after we selected the topic, the group decided to start searching data in all possible means like internet, including articles, books on line and research projects regarding the topic selected; books related to the topic and magazines that have any kind of article that provides us with information to support the essay.

The argument started to be developed by organizing the gathered data that gave us the first ideas on how to prepare the case of study, doing this by a logical sequence which tells which factors affect first and what the following ones are to succeed in college. By doing literature survey and criticizing it we have interpreted our previous knowledge of the topic and improved it so we have created a set of ideas that have been written in an outline which is going to be the center of the case study and eventually this ideas will be developed in the whole essay to give the best argument and conclusions of why college students succeed.

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# ANNEXES